

**Tompkins County Youth Services Board  
January 2021 Minutes  
Meeting Conducted virtually via ZOOM.**

**Present:** Patty Van de Bogart, Khaki Wunderlich, Ronny Hardaway, Tamer Elshourbagy, Lisa Campbell, Ian Schachner, Lisa Monroe, Glenn Morey

**Excused:** Magdalena Smith, Marnie Kirchgessner

**Absent:** Jennifer Foote-Dean, Sara Watrous

**Staff:** Kate Shanks-Booth, Bridgette Nugent, Theresa Albert

**Guest:** Pat Buechel (pending board approval)

Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m.

**Welcome & Introductions**

Zaun Mashburn and John Gregory of the Trumansburg/Ulysses Youth Commission were both present. Zaun is a resident of the Town of Ulysses and is interested in becoming more involved in various committees and ensuring youth voice is incorporated. John serves as Chair of the Trumansburg/Ulysses Youth Commission and wants to ensure that Ulysses/Trumansburg is well represented on the Youth Services Advisory Board.

**Approval of Minutes**

Due to a lack of quorum, the vote on the approval of the November December minutes will be moved to the February meeting agenda.

**Rick Alvord from the Learning Web – Agency Presentation**

Rick Alvord, the Director of Operations at the Learning Web, provided a brief overview of the programs and services offered at the Learning Web. Rick outlined the recent staffing changes of the agency (retirement of longtime Deputy Director Sally Schwartzbach, and the onboarding of a new Executive Director, Danielia Barron). These significant staffing transitions occurred in the midst of COVID-19. Additional information provided by Rick included:

- Overview of the Youth Exploration/Career Exploration and Apprenticeship Program which serves to connect youth in Tompkins County with apprenticeship and career exploration opportunities (i.e. tours).
- One Youth Exploration program is funded by the Joint Youth Commission, which also funds a volunteer program at LACS where students lead and participate in volunteer projects that serve the community.
- A contract with DSS supports life skills training with foster care youth which focuses on career exploration, financial literacy, cooking, and other important life skills.
- Another pilot program, Supporting Safe Families, is a parenting education program to support parents at risk of CPS involvement or currently involved with CPS to encourage prevention and reunification of families.
- The Youth Outreach program supports youth and young adults aged 16-24 that are homeless. This program operates 15 apartments (TILPS) where young adults can live for 18 months, learning independent living skills prior to transitioning to more stable housing. Youth Outreach also operates a Drop-In Center where youth can visit for basic necessities (toiletries, clothing, internet access, food).

In response to questions from Board members, Rick provided the following:

- Due to COVID, the career exploration and apprenticeship program was hit particularly hard, with a lack of in-person apprenticeship and tour opportunities. However, it did allow for the expansion of

virtual opportunities, which expands the different careers that youth can be exposed to, across the nation.

- Apprenticeship opportunities and mentors are always being recruited based on what young people say they are interested in.
- COVID also posed challenges for the Youth Outreach program, including the need to safety proof the office, close the Youth Outreach center, and shift to virtual group sessions/trainings. The lack of connection in these forums is noticeable.
- Rick states that the Learning Web is moving towards solidifying a continuum of services for youth, and encourages any youth facing challenges or in need of opportunities to be referred to the Learning Web. Rick can be reached at [rick@learning-web.org](mailto:rick@learning-web.org)

### **Municipal Youth Services System Overview**

Kate Shanks-Booth provided a presentation that gave a high-level overview of the MYSS, to include its history, mission, foundation of Positive Youth Development, and a breakdown of how each municipal youth commission receives and allocates its funding. Information was also provided on the Rural Youth Services program through Cornell Cooperative Extension and on the municipal Recreation Partnership.

Slides will be shared with Youth Board members and can be used to present to municipal boards and other partners. Questions from board members on various funded programs, what defines “underrepresented,” and how youth voice is incorporated were all addressed.

### **Director’s Update - Highlights**

#### State Budget Update

- 2020 State Aid Update – This funding amount originally reduced in late 2020, and the YSD distributed the cut evenly across funded programs. In the beginning of January 2021, OCFS notified of an increase in YDP/RHY funding for 2020. YSD now is in the process of amending 2020 contracts and budgets to be able to claim for the additional funds for 2020, a significant accounting challenge.
- Kate reported that the Governor’s budget relies on a federal stimulus that will address the \$6.5 billion NYS budget gap. There is a proposed 5% cut to YDP/RHY funding, with the 20% withholding continuing through the first Quarter of 2021 (through March 31<sup>st</sup>). It is then anticipated that 15% will be reimbursed back to the counties, and the remaining 5% will be the cut.
- Onboarding for the Coordinator of Community Youth Services position has been put on pause by the County Administrator until the impacts of the NYS budget are more fully understood. Kate continues to be in touch with the selected candidate to keep them updated.
- Conversations with potential RHY funded Host Home operators continues. Several local non-profit agencies have been explored as potential hosts for this program, without success. The Village at Ithaca has expressed strong interest and will be required to submit a full application for review by the Youth Services Advisory Board and staff.

### **Pat Buechel Approval**

- The Youth Board went into Executive Session but, without quorum, was not able to approve Pat Buechel’s nomination to serve as an At-Large member of the Youth Services Board.

Meeting adjourned: 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Bridgette Nugent